Mr. Vieyra.— I would affirm the principle of the Bill and leave the details to be settled by the Select Committee.

Mr. Govinda Pillai.—The problem of giving relief to the Munsiffs has to be solved. We have already 22 Munsiffs in the State, for an area which in British India would have at most 6 or 7 Munsiffs. Are we then to increase the number of Munsiffs indefinitely? I certainly think not. Some means must therefore be devised to cope with this increasing work and the enhancement of the Small Cause jurisdiction of the Munsiffs is one of such means.

As regards the scheme suggested by Mr. Padmanabha Iyer, that it would be better to have two grades of Munsiffs, one having jurisdiction up to Rs. 1000 and another created by empowering particular Munsiffs on the recommendation of the High Court with jurisdiction up to Rs. 2000, that is no doubt a good measure.

The proposal to start with empowering Munsiffs with Small Cause jurisdiction up to Rs. 100, with power vested in Government to raise the same in particular instances to Rs. 200, may be left to the Select Committee.

With these remarks I approve of the principle of the Bill.

The principle of the Bill was affirmed by a majority of the Council.

Mr. Ananda Rao then proposed that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, consisting of Mr. Padmanabha Iyer, Mr. Sankara Menon, Mr. Vieyra, Mr. Kuruvila and the Mover, to report in two months.

The motion was put and agreed to.

THE REGISTRATION REGULATION AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. Ananda Rao.— Sir, In accordance with the permision obtained at the last meeting, I beg now to introduce the Bill to amend the Registration Regulation (I of 1070). The Bill is now before you and the statement of objects and reasons clearly explains the amendments proposed. I would, therefore, move that the principle of the Bill be affirmed.

Seconded by Mr. Vieyra.

Under orders of the President, the Secretary then read out to the Council the letter from Mr. Raman Pillai, the Director of Registration, giving his views on the Bill.

Mr. Udaya Varma Raja.—Of the two changes contemplated by the Bill, the one proposing to do away with the presentation of copies of documents for registration is, no doubt, good. As many improved methods of providing against malpractices have been introduced in the department, there is no longer any necessity for insisting on copies of documents also being presented. Besides, the change when effected will save much time and labour.

But I do not think the other change is desirable. In the first place, it will deprive the registering offices of the advantages of close inspection by the District Registrar. In the second place, he will not be able to do much of registration work. In the third place his responsibility becomes divided.

I wish to observe here that there are other important points of difference between the Indian Registration Act and the Travancore Registration Regulation, which the member in charge of the Bill has failed to notice. Thirteen years have now elapsed since the Registration Regulation was passed by His Highness the Maha Raja. It is time therefore that it should be made in accordance with the policy of our progressive administration, perfect and up-to-date, by being re-cast upon the lines of the Indian Act.

I have also to observe that the learned Mover of the Bill failed to note that there is a correction needed in Section 78 of the Registration Regulation. It may be a clerical error. But there it is. The reference to Section 228 of the Penal

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Code was made when the Indian Penal Code was in force here. According to the Travancore Penal Code, the Section ought to be 226. Again in Sections 59 and 60 the word 'Memorandum' has to be substituted for the word 'copy' consistently with the amendments proposed in Sections 46 and 47.

For these reasons, I beg to oppose the motion for referring to a Select Committee the Bill as it stands. I beg, Sir, to urge upon the Council the necessity for requesting the learned Mover to withdraw this Bill and introduce a new and improved one, to amend the whole Registration Regulation (I of 1070).

Mr. Raman Tampi.—After what my friend, Mr. Udaya Varma Raja, has said, I beg to second his motion, namely, that the Bill as at present drafted be withdrawn and that a new Bill embodying all the necessary changes, be re-introduced. It is a rule of practice, at any rate, observed by all legislative bodies, that whenever any important piece of legislation has been in force for about a decade, instead of amending it piecemeal, the whole enactment should be re-cast and modified.

The question was then discussed, after which Mr. Ananda Rao said:— Sir, the general view of the Council appears to be for re-enacting the Regulation with all the modifications that may be found necessary. I therefore beg for permission to withdraw the present Bill.

Permission was granted accordingly.

THE ARMS BILL.

Mr. Kesava Pillai.—In accordance with the permission already granted by the Council on the 5th October last, a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to arms, has been framed and published in the Gazette; and notice of its introduction has been given to the members. The existing Arms Regulation III of 1061, as amended by Regulation I of 1069, controls only the manufacture, export and import of Arms, Ammunition and Military Stores and does not place any restriction on the possession and use of Arms. But the law in force in British India, namely, Act 11 of 1878, restricts the possession and use of Arms; and it is proposed to amend our law, so as to introduce similar restrictions here. I have already explained in the statement of objects and reasons attached to the Bill, the grounds for the change proposed; and the points of difference between the British Act and the proposed Bill, are also noted in that statement. I would not waste the time of the Council by reiterating what has been already said. Suffice it to say, that by confining the applicability of the proposed law to fire-arms, bayonets and cannon, and by allowing the people to freely use other weapons, the rigour of the measure has been considerably reduced, as compared with what it is in British India.

It will also be seen that Section 24 of the Bill enables Government to exempt any person or classes of persons, or to exclude any part of Travancore from the operation of the law. Thus means is afforded for granting concessions in favour of persons residing in places, where the use of fire-arms is absolutely necessary for protection from wild beasts. I beg to move that the principle of the Bill may be affirmed.

Seconded by Mr. Vieyra.

Mr. Kuruvila.—I submit there are several people in the State, who live entirely by hunting. A vast portion of the State has been reserved as forests and I have heard that even reaping the adjacent cultivated cherikals is attended with serious risk from wild animals. Further, the fire-arms actually used are not of the military pattern. Primitive fire-arms locally made by our blacksmiths are all that are generally used, except by the European Planters or their local friends.

Under these circumstances, I humbly beg that the possession of Arms for lawful purposes and the *bona fide* local manufacture of primitive fire-arms of a non-military pattern, may not be interdicted. The import by sea of all fire-arms should however be positively prohibited or carefully controlled. The import of small percussion caps and the preparation of gunpowder for sporting and for festivals and for other lawful purposes, should also continue to be controlled as at present. In

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